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SONGS IN A SUN-GARDEN

Songs in a Sun-Garden

by

Coletta Ryan



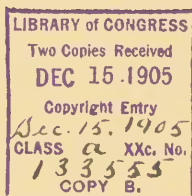
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Dedicated to
Charles E. Hurd

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SONGS IN A SUN-GARDEN

AT CHENONCEAUX

CÉLINE

AT last ! the fire-place at Chenonceaux . . .
So silent now, and once so eloquent !
Alas ! where are the voices ? where the jests ?
The bright and sparkling laughter — where indeed ?

JEAN

Ah, here it was that men of letters came —

CÉLINE

And still are coming, Jean ! . . . Last night I heard
Your name among great lights ! Ay, surely, praise . . .
The critic, too, withheld his cruel blade
Which once flashed over you with clever scorn
And, since the world insists, with sullen air
He grants you some small talent . . . Never mind . . .
Last, but not least, you know, you must suspect
I read your worth and merit . . .

JEAN

It is sweet,
Céline, to feel that you believe in me.
The world is but a heartless analyst
Who, with a measured lore and grudging hand,
Would blight my noblest efforts . . . Ah, indeed ?
The critic ? Well, it matters not the word
It pleases him to utter. If the wines
At dinner make a merry man of him,
He writes with tender generosity !
But if he owe his landlord, or, still worse,
If cigarettes are few and of a brand
Not suited to his fancy, he prepares

A bitter essay on my weakest points —
A dwarf is Justice in these days, Céline !

CÉLINE

A dwarf ! Ah no . . . a dwarf can never grow
Beyond his littleness. Say, rather, that
A child is Justice who will one day turn
A giant for your dear art's sake. (*Aside*) Poor love !

JEAN

A child is justice then ! . . . Céline, this glass
Reflected once, in old, romantic days,
The face of Mary Queen of Scots !

CÉLINE

And here
It was, I think, that Voltaire and Rousseau
And many men of learning, fresh for wit
And picturesque attraction, came to see
Madame Dupin.

JEAN

She owned fair Chenonceaux —
A charming woman whose keen intellect
Drew famous minds about her.

CÉLINE

How I sigh,
Hearing you speak of brilliant womanhood . . .
I am so commonplace ! . . . and when you speak
Of wit and charm I realize that I
Can never please you . . . To the master-mind
The jewel of a true companionship

[4]

(Nay, do not interrupt me!) is the thing
Which stimulates his greatness . . .

JEAN

Foolish one!

Your words are sane enough ; but, lady mine,
You are my dear companion — are you not ?

CÉLINE (*gloomily*)

You dwell on summits far removed from me —
Strive as I may, I cannot reach your heights.

JEAN (*solemnly*)

We two have wandered over many miles :
For both the mountains are, as yet, afar.
I have not pressed the cloud-dust with my feet,
Nor shall I till this raven hair is white
With reminiscences of many years !
Fame, with its silver voice and shining eyes,
Lies buried in your palm, my loved Céline. —
It is a flower which blossoms when the heart
Is ripe with sympathy, or deeply grieved :
Either extreme may lift the daring soul
To peaks of high ambition . . . Tis with you,
For you, because of you, my star shall rise !

CÉLINE

I know your feeling. (*Aside*) Unaccountable
That he should still admire me !
(*To Jean*) Yet I have half suspected that you love,
Upon some lofty pedestal of dreams —

JEAN

Another woman? Yes, 'tis true, Céline ;
But you would not be jealous of her — you ?

CÉLINE

Tell me of her who tries to come between
Me and my friendship !

JEAN

Listen then, Céline :

I loved a woman once, when I was rich
With endless treasures given me by youth —
Before the profile of the changeful world
(A heavy outline, morbid and grotesque,
Of rough, misguided human pencil-strokes)
Enslaved me with its fatal ugliness
And kept me near the heart of sordid things.

CÉLINE

How you persist in shunning the bright side
So kindly sheltering the universe !
My dear, dark shadow, poets should not be
So fiercely gloomy !

JEAN (*sorrowfully*)

Gloom a habit is
Because poor Eve had one too many ears !
Dear Sunlight, under your uplifting views
I shall grow optimistic as the day !

CÉLINE (*tapping her foot*)

I thank you for your words ; but now I wait
Impatiently for knowledge of . . . this . . . love !

JEAN

I loved a woman once, and grew a pow'r,
A telling voice among the hearts of men!
I was the strong wind blowing in the face
Of my republic . . . It was not foretold
By dream, or sign, or deep prophetic voice
That we should meet in rare America . . .
It seemed to me no other land was fair
As fair America, wherein I sang —
No nation gifted with such length and breadth
As great, aspiring America!
Surrounded by the arts and sciences
And countless visions of becoming toil
Young womanhood stood forth and, unafraid,
Defied the Old World customs. A perfect flow'r
Possessed of peerless beauty, talent, poise,
Force, concentration, feeling, intellect,
With wit which played among her deepest themes
(Lest they be lost to half the multitude),
And tact to hide her fine solidity
(When heaviness would weigh too heavily):
Thus grew the woman of America!
With all the glory of her heart and mind
She bloomed beneath the justice of her land
Surrounded by true standards! Ay, she bloomed
Until her radiance sent forth the gift
Of precious comradeship and pow'r to hold
Beyond the hour given her by charm —
Beyond the crumbling wall of coquetry —
Beyond the burning of youth's candle — ay,
Beyond the boundary of life itself —
I fell a victim . . . can you guess the rest?

CÉLINE

She must indeed be irresistible
Who is, at once, both strong and charming. I
Who, spell-bound, listen, have discovered, Jean,
She is a type you love, and not one heart —
And, knowing this, my spirits rise, for I
May learn the secrets of America
And, too, approach the being of your dreams —
(*sighing*) As near as my poor self can ever come !

JEAN

My dear Céline, when womanhood I praised
Your name was not excluded . . . French you are,
And oh ! what Frenchman would not die for you
Who have the gifts which mark America
With all the graces given you by France !
'Twas safe for me to name a certain type,
So near you are to all I picture you —
So near that type itself . . . I bow to you
Before all other queens, I place your charms
And true, substantial qualities so high —
(*Irrelevantly*) Céline, we need great women . . . Do you
hear the wind
That blows against the wall of Chenonceaux ?
Hearken ! . . . what whispers it ? . . . This way, Céline . . .

CÉLINE (*shivering*)

It sounds prophetic . . . Do you think the clouds
Are planning for another storm, dear Jean ?
How black it looks ! . . . And oh ! what is that noise ?

JEAN

It must be thunder !

CÉLINE

See, the lightning plays
About the corners of the ancient room.

JEAN (*tenderly*)

My dear one, are you frightened?

CÉLINE

Frightened, Jean,
When you are here beside me? Oh, how still
The atmosphere! How strange . . . how very . . . still!
I fancy, dear, if I should close my eyes
I'd hear the solemn and familiar tread
Of sleepless ghosts that once were roaming — Oh!
See how that shadow flutters back and forth! . . .
It cannot be a figure over there —
Not there, beside the window . . . Ah, my dear,
How I persist in seeking spirit-forms!
Give me your hand, my Jean, that I may cease
My foolish wanderings . . .

JEAN

How still it is!
Céline, I fancy, if I lingered here,
That every room would turn to Paradise,
And each old curio would learn to smile
In silent understanding . . . Thanks, dear one,
For this too happy afternoon . . . I go
Back to my hermit's life — and you, perhaps,
To wed some worthier, better man than I.

CÉLINE

Once I was young and thoughtless. I refused

The best of noblemen : a Poet ! He
Had left me not three twilights when I found
How much I loved and cherished him ! Too proud
To contradict myself I let him stay
Within his cheerless hermitage to grow
A famous man of letters . . . Now he comes,
After the long, black years of bitterness,
To tempt me to confide in him . . . Dear heart,
I love you !

JEAN

So, my own, you are the same
And still care something for me ?

CÉLINE

As I live
I never loved you more . . . Behold the sky,
The brilliant color glowing in the west !
The world of light that celebrates our joy . . .

JEAN

Shine on, O West, forever and a day !
My love and I have never loved before —
This is the first fair meeting of our souls
And we are strangely happy !

CÉLINE

Are you sure,
O Poet, that you love me . . . love me still ?
What of that woman . . . in . . . America ?

THE MIRTH-MAIDEN

I

YOU'RE a bright little maid, you're a brave little
maid!

You laugh in the sunshine, you laugh in the shade ;
You never can frown and you ne'er can be staid !

What have you done to me ; what have you done ?
Why should you run to me ; why should you run ?
Life has not spun for me frolic and fun.

What do you want with my sorrows and tears ?
What do you know of my heart and its fears ?
What can you do with my burden of years ?

Go to the youth with the sun in his eyes !
What would you do with the sad and the wise ?
Go, with your laughter that sparkles and flies !

Stay ! I regret it ; regret and regret !
Maiden, forget it ; O maiden, forget !
Dearest one, dearest, abide with me yet !

Stay with your laughter that pulls at the sun
Downward and downward until it has won.
Ray after ray, from the dim to the bright,
Teeming with gladness and mirth and delight,
Paid them, and laid them, in merriment sweet,
Under the willow, to reign at your feet !
Laugh, lovely maiden, until this great ball
Has never a thought of the heavens at all !

II

Here, while I listen, you
 Glisten and glisten, you
 Smile as I christen you
 Bright light, white light,
 One light, sun light.
 No name is light enough,
 No name is bright enough,
 No name is white enough,
 Dearest, for you.

O wonderful thief of all sorrows I name you!
 Behold, in this prison I'll shame you and tame you,
 And whisper and sing of the bright glowing flame you
 Have kindled within this poor heart that would blame
 you
 With fervent caresses, forever the same. You
 Must come to the arms that are waiting to claim you!
 Come! Nearest, dearest; clearest eyes!
 Truer, bluer, than the skies —
 Ease and please the heart that lies
 Yearning for you!

III

Am I white? I did not know it!
 Am I aged? Do I show it?
 Ugh! I hate the head of gray,
 Laughing at the young and gay,
 Like a ghost of yesterday!
 Put your hand upon my brow;
 Smooth me, soothe me. Quickly now

Rub away that ugly frown;
Turn the silver into brown;
Thrust your fairy fingers through it —
Fairy fingers soon will do it!
Come, dear maid, and swiftly sprinkle
Happy smiles in every wrinkle;
More and more! Another . . . Plenty!
Now, again I'm five and twenty!

Five and twenty! Ah, I feel it;
Nothing, nothing can conceal it!
Sweet one of a thousand poses,
Come with me among the roses;
Only there, as heaven's above you,
Can I tell you how I love you!
Queen of merriment and glee,
Come, my darling, come with me!

THE SUN-SONG

I AM the brilliant sun,
The shining sun,
To youth and laughter pleasantly I run.
I beam, I glow, I beam and glow again
And nothing know of sorrow nor of pain —
Because I am the sun,
The friendly sun.
Ablaze with all the beauty of my reign!
Oh! world, dost thou not know I am the sun
Shining and joyful over God's domain?

I am the yellow sun —
The shining sun.
And only fair deeds cloak me. I am done
With clouds that veil the happy heart of man.
My soul was builded on a lovelier plan;
Because I am the sun,
The friendly sun,
And all my being to good-nature ran!
Oh! nothing am I but the laughing sun
And naught but joy and merriment I scan!

I am the singing sun,
The shining sun —
And Faith's the gleaming battle I have won.
How beautiful it is to sweetly shine
O'er grumbling manhood, o'er earth's weary whine.

Bravely I am the sun,
The friendly sun,
And heaven hath said my image is divine !
And well I know it . . . Oh, I am the sun
And all the great immortal worlds are mine !

THE HOPE-TREE

THERE'S a happy joy-bird singing in the fair
hope-tree —

A simple joy-bird singing in the bough of yonder
tree :

He's a cheery little fellow
In a coat of red and yellow,
And he laughs and jests and teases,
Tantalizes and yet pleases —

And his heart came down from heaven to my fair hope-
tree !

There's a bright and blessed birdling in the fair
hope-tree,

He is beaming on my spirit from the bough of yonder
tree !

And I wonder why, unbidden,
He so long from me was hidden
In the dreary autumn's blowing
And the weary winter's snowing,
When the days dragged on so slowly 'neath the still
hope-tree !

.

There's a happy song-bird singing in the fair hope-
tree,

Singing songs of praise and promise in the bough of
yonder tree !

And his mellow voice grows stronger,
And his wild enchantments longer
As he sings, the while I listen
That the earth may gleam and glisten,
Through the lightly swaying branches of the fair
hope-tree!

MORNING

HAIL! O glorious morning!
Dawn of a perfect day!
No more the bright world scorning
Shall death and discord play.
The radiant skies give warning,
And he who stops the way
Must step aside and leave the space for those who
come to pray.

Beauty breathing from the mountain,
Beauty singing in the square,
Beauty sleeping by the fountain,
Beauty everywhere :
Oh, the world is full of beauty, and life is free and
fair,
And sweet the message that comes to me from
whispers in the air !

Hail! O glorious morning!
Dawn of a perfect day.
The new earth is adorning
Herself in bright array ;
And death and darkness scorning
Resumes her gracious sway ;
The clouds have melted before the sun, beauty
has come to stay!
Oh, the world is a world of beauty, and life is fair
and free,
And the songs it sings and the joys it brings are
sent for you and me.

A BIRD SINGING IN THE GARDEN

(To a child)

WHO am I?
Who am I?

Who am I?

You ask,

As if I could really tell!

Does the sun 'neath whose goodness we brown and
bask,

From the palace down to the cell,

Go shouting a name from his throne of might

To the birds as they twitter and hop?

Why, he is so many in heaven's great sight,

He would never know where to stop!

He is all!

He is all!

He is all!

(Do you hear?)

He's the Universe happy and whole!

(But who dares to christen a soul?)

And he'd laugh at one name

And eternally blame

You and cry: "Little dame!"

(Do you hear?)

He is all,

As I'm all,

Neither measured nor small,

Nor bound by just a mere name —

(Do you hear?)

Nor bound by just a mere name!

Who am I ?
Who am I ?
Who am I ?
(For shame !)
Is fire not more than its flame,
Its flame ?
It is all that it touches and all that it moves,
Defying dull Science that questions and proves !
'Tis the best of the dream
That we're more than we seem,
Not bound by a name, just a name —
(For shame !)
Ask easier things, little dame,
(Do you hear ?)
Ask easier things, little dame !

INSPIRATION

O PEOPLE! on this day of cheer I'll tell you how
to sing!

You surely know
That true songs flow
As flows the crystal spring!
They are at ease
With bird and breeze
And nag the singer's heart,
Till, pure and high,
Sweet melody
Becomes his better part.

Oh, drink the air
And pray your pray'r
For higher light to win you.
The golden while
Stray mile on mile
Until the lyric 's in you!
And oh, be simple and sincere!
The earth has long been grieving
For just that little word of cheer
That you've alone been weaving!

Be just and gentle in your ways
(Not for the world's approving),
And generous with your neighbor's praise
And live for love and loving.
O drink the air
And pray your pray'r

For highest light to win you.
The golden while
Stray mile on mile
And God shall blossom in you!

GOD IS NEAR

GOD is trying to speak with me and I am trying
to hear;

But the angry roar of an angry sea
Has told my soul that it is not free;
And my strange, imperfect ear
Has only caught, on the breast of day,
The strain of a song that is far away, —
So I sit and listen and humbly pray,
For God is near.

.

God is trying to speak with me and I am trying to hear.

The sea that held me has gone to sleep,
And still is the voice of the cruel deep, —
No longer shall I fear.

I have found the chord that is true and right, —
The chord of Promise, and Love, and Light,
That comes to banish the curse of night.
God is near.

God is trying to speak with me and I am trying to hear.

Away with the gold that is won by death
Of mind and body. (O Nazareth!
O living, breathing tear!)
Away, away with the realists' hand,
Away with the tyrants that slave the land,
For the heart must sing and the stars command.
(God is near.)

And soothe and comfort the voice of pain,
Man's Eden must return again,
And the Christ that suffered must live and reign.
(God is near.)

And hush and silence the battle's din, —
And lift forever the mists of sin
That veil the wealth of the God within.

(God is near.)

And strive, O strive to be brave and true ;
The world is dying of me and you
And the deeds undone that we both might do !

(God is near.)

.

God is trying to speak with me and I am trying to hear.

O pray that we may not grow too weak
To hearken to One when He tries to speak
Through prophet, saint, and seer.

And love His image that fills the eyes
Of men and women that seek the skies ;
For the soul must die if it will not rise !

(God is near.)

THE LADY OF GOOD HOPE

A WOMAN fair came joyously across the sun-lit hill.

“I am,” she said, “the dear earth’s guest — the Lady of Good Will!”

“Alas!” I cried, “this wilderness is desolate and drear.”

“No, no,” she answered, “not to me, the Lady of Good Cheer!”

“Behold,” I said, “the weary hearts that struggle in the grove.”

“I know them and for them I live, the Lady of Pure Love;

But I can only see the sheep on yonder gentle slope,
And One who calls me ‘Mary’!” said the Lady of Good Hope.

“Art thou indeed the mother-maid?” I whispered half in pray’r.

“Dear child,” she answered tenderly, and passed me in the air!

O FOR A THOUSAND HANDS

O FOR a thousand hands!
Tender and white and kind —
That the world might sway
In the light of day
To the land of the Perfect Mind;
That the tears of sorrow and sin and shame
Might leave their burden of blight and blame
And learn to cherish my spirit-name.
O for a thousand hands!

O for a thousand hands!
Tender and large and strong —
That their deeds might pray
For the coming day
Through the nights that are dark and long;
For in times of travail the nights are such;
And the heart of the woman that loved too much
Might live again at my gentle touch.
O for a thousand hands!

O for a thousand hands!
For hands that are smooth and rough.
I toil all day
In the common way,
But I am not large enough.
'Tis a weary stretch to the crying beach,
And the soul goes farther than hands can reach;
I must write the sermon I cannot preach.
O for a thousand hands!

O for a thousand hands !
The Master's work to do.
I toil all day
As a woman may,
But my hands are only two!
I stand alone in the village street,
The sad world falling about my feet,
While the suff'ring God and the stars entreat . . .
O for a thousand hands !

THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF GOD

WHY seeks't thou but the glowing sky
Thy Father to adore? . . .
Look forth and drink His message high
Who standeth at the door.
"Tis but a bird from yonder nest
So cold and frail to see."
Then take him safely to thy breast —
Thy God hath come to thee!

Why turn thy footsteps to the hill
To say thy little pray'r?
Behold! one sitteth, white and still,
Who used to be so fair!
"Tis but a maid who cannot rest,
A maid of tears and sighs!"
Then soothe the heart that is oppressed —
God liveth in her eyes!

Why turn thy gaze to view the sun,
O stranger? Far below
A wretched life shall soon be run —
A life that loved thee so!
"Tis but a youth by joy unblest,
Who soon shall mark the sod":
Make room! thou hast another guest —
For all of these are God!

Look not so high, nor look so long
For Him thou wouldst have near:
Lo! by thy side and in thy song
His image shall appear!

Look not so high nor look so far
For Him thou wouldst embrace,
Who comes from out a golden star
To save a dying race!
O comrade, ere with thoughtless eye
Thou wingest heaven o'er,
Look forth and drink His message high
Who standeth at the door!

THE FIRST SPRING

BACKWARD we fly, through the sunlight's gleam,
To the home of the earliest flower—
Back to the joys of Life's youngest dream
And the birth of the Spring's first hour!

Spring! Spring! Spring! Spring!
Who says he has heard it before—
The word that falls from the poet's wing
To sparkle forevermore?

Spring! Spring! Spring! Spring!
Who says he has listened too long
To the million voices that flow and fling
Their music into her song?

Dear comrade, there never was Spring to name
Before this dawn of grace.
It is only now you can call and claim
Her young and lovely face!

Spring never has been, o'er mead and mount,
Before this blessed day;
The first it is (oh, you need not count!) —
The first in the world, I say!

We thought it was spring last year, my love,
When the moon shone in our eyes,
And the trees hung over to smile and send
Our whisperings to the skies.

And you did not know, and I did not know
(For our vision was so small,
I could not know and you could not know)
That it was not Spring at all!

Until this morn
She was not born
To consecrate the earth;
These silver rills
That voice the hills
Baptized her after birth!
And the great pine tree,
Beyond you and me,
Was godfather, brave and true;
And the willow there,
So young and fair,
Stood godmother; and the blue
That stretched high over the hopes of man
Was the dome of the church we knew,
And the birds flew into the loft and ran
A thousand masses through!

Never, never, never, my love, again and again I
say,
It has never been Spring's sweet task to reign
Before this natal day!

Open the window and lean far out
To meet the flood of light;
Open the window and hear me shout
I am done with the night, the night!

For a wonderful morn has come to stay,
Beneficent with sun,
And a voice chants over the leafy way,
The world has just begun !
And June will come to woo and win
And quicken sea and sod
(The sweetest flower that blossoms in
The calendar of God) !
Her petals rare shall saunter out,
East, west, and south and north,
To tell us what we think about
And drag our secrets forth !

(A Voice from the Grass.)

Oh, I am a meadow of shining gold,
This glorious first Spring !
And a thousand souls do I make and mold
This beautiful first Spring !
I am every flower in wood and wold
(The great Creator's face I hold) ;
I was never bought, I was never sold ;
O heavenly first Spring !

(An Echo from the Fields.)

Over me walk with tenderness,
For I am the Spring, the Spring !
And open my throat ; I must confess
That I am dying to sing !
Oh, stifle me not with your unbelief,
And you : who are you to fling
Down into the world of glee and grief
The words of the one glad Spring ?

(A Message from the Trees.)

Listen, listen, listen, my love, —
I will not keep you long ;
I am only the heart of a brand-new day
Turned into a song, a song !
Oh, listen, listen : you cannot know,
'Till the flag of truth is unfurled,
That this is the first and only Spring
There ever was in the world.

(In the Vineyard — Child.)

Mother, mother, mother of mine,
O mother, what would you give
If I told you this little trailing vine
Is really going to live ?
Last eve your song was sad and drear,
And once I heard you sigh,
And I know, my own (though you shed no
tear),
You thought it was going to die !
But the sunlight has enchanted it,
And see — I have transplanted it !

(With Entreaty.)

O mother, mother, mother of mine,
Look not away so far ;
And dry your eyes and tell me now
How pleased and proud you are !
The Spring is here, so weep no more ;
Our prayers were not in vain ;
I promise you this little vine
Will never wither again !

'T will flourish, bloom and multiply, and grow and
grow and grow,
Until it links divided worlds (O mother, weep not so!)
And it shall seek and surely find upon some gentle
shore
The step you miss and only think that you shall hear
no more!

(A Voice from the Auditorium.)

Since I am the shadow of Art, oh let
Me follow the workers where
They pause and falter and may forget
The missions of the air!
Painter and poet and singer am I,
And the eyes of the world for aye,
And I labor under Life's canopy.
Create! Create! I say!

Hearken, hearken, O wondrous Art
(The voice of a new-made Earth)!
I am here before you to bare my heart
And sing of your splendid worth!
And if I am a stone in the winding lane
That climbs the mountain steep,
I pray you lift me over the plain
And cast me into the deep!

Spring! Spring! Spring! Spring!
Who says he has heard it before—
The word that falls from the poet's wing
To sparkle forevermore?

Spring! Spring! Spring! Spring!
Who says he has listened too long
To the million voices that flow and fling
Their music into her song?

Dear people, there never was Spring to name
Before this dawn of grace;
It is only now you can call and claim
Her young and lovely face.
Spring never has been o'er mead and mount
Before this blessed day.
The first it is (oh, you need not count!) —
The first in the world, I say!

“HA! HA! HA!”

HA! ha! ha!
Ha! ha! ha!

Just toss away your sorrows with a

Ha! ha! ha!

There's a stupid beauty-thief,
And his name is Needless Grief;—

And a wicked watch he's keeping,
For he sets the whole world weeping

Till some angel comes to cheer it with a

Ha! ha! ha!

Ha! ha! ha!

Just toss away your sorrows with a

Ha! ha! ha!

There's a most successful doctor in our neighborhood:
He doesn't deal in medicine, but ah! he does you
good!

You can see him for a mile

With his pleasant, genial smile

And the joke upon his spirit singing:

Ha! ha! ha!

.

And now, 'twixt me and you,

Does it help you to be blue?

Does it make you half so dear

As to radiate good cheer

As you toss away your sorrows with a

Ha! ha! ha!

Ha! ha! ha!

Just toss away your sorrows with a

Ha! ha! ha!

What a wretched view you've had
That religion is so sad!
Cast that long face in the sea —
Joy is here for you and me!
Melancholy's an offence;
Don't be witless, don't be dense!
Send your troubles forth to roam —
Surely heaven is your home!
There's a message sweet enough
If the road 's a little rough!
Don't go foolishly pursuing
Tasks that other souls are doing!
Be content with what you are —
Just remember you're a star.
Oh, forget that silly whine,
Longing for another's line.
Do your own work with a zest,
Do your noblest, do your best,
Pausing not, and not comparing,
Only love and good-will sharing.
'Tis a happy, holy way,
Living on from day to day,
With the grace of God about you, singing
 Ha! ha! ha!
 Ha! ha! ha!
Just toss away your sorrows with a
 Ha! ha! ha!

OH, LET ME SING

OH, let me sing !
The sun, the birds, the grief-defying trees
Are joyous minstrels, playing with the breeze.
Through field and forest gleeful echoes ring —
Oh, let me sing !

Oh, let me sing !
Full well I know the sky is clouded o'er,
That Hope and I have quarreled, and no more
Life flies before me borne on golden wing,
Yet, let me sing !

Oh, let me sing !
The heart and all its veins for joy were born ;
The soul God saved me from the first fair morn
Outwits my sorrow, an immortal thing,
Living to sing !

RICHES

“SILVER and gold of the mint !” they cry
From the world with a rasping voice ;
“But give me the silver and gold,” say I,
“That heaven finds more choice !”

There is gold enough in the buttercup
To build a home for me,
And wealth untold when the sun is up
Over the golden sea !

There is silver crowning the queen of night,
And silver is her throne ;
There is silver shading the soft moonlight,
And the trees are silver-blown !

There's a glowing splendor at every turn
In Nature's shining hall :
'Tis the honest fortune I did not earn,
And I'm going through it all !

MY CANDLE

BY the sanctuary dim and dark
My candle burned for thee.
It was only a faint and glimmering spark
That swayed with the breeze's breath, a mark
For the wish that guided my soul's frail barque
(My candle burned for thee).

When, suddenly, as I lingered there
(My candle burned for thee),
There came a stir in the holy air,
And someone whispered: "My own, my fair,
I am here on the wings of thy fervent pray'r" —
(My candle burned for thee).

"I am here beside thee, my faithful bride"
(My candle burned for thee.)
"Thy soul is the home wherein I hide,
And thy pure spirit my sweetest guide" . . .
The west wind whispered, the willow sighed,
And my candle burned for thee!

SYMPATHY

THOU lovest me. Ah, loved one, dost thou know,
In loving me, how many loves am I?
I number more than all the stars that glow
In shining thousands pressed against the sky.

Dear love, I am the world, I am each heart
That sobs and sighs and clamors for a friend;
I am of every brotherhood a part
That finds the true beginning in the end.

I am the path that seeks untrodden ways,
Believing in the meadows unrevealed;
I am the solace of unhappy days;
I am the battle and I am the shield.

I am the triumph of the Past, that lies
Upon the Present pointing out the way;
I am the Future looking in thine eyes
To beg a million favors of to-day.

I am the child that motherless must weep
To hallow and enchain all the land;
And I am motherhood that cannot sleep
Without the pressure of a tiny hand.

I am the maiden waiting for the star
That, resting in its treasure-home above,
Brings forth the hidden glories from afar,
To consecrate the weeping form of Love.

I am the lover of the early dawn,
By deep and distant yearnings strangely sought,
Until the shadows lighten and are gone,
And two at last are wedded by a thought.

I am the wife that walks with Fate alone,
More bitter and more tearful than the rain ;
I am the husband claiming for his own
The greater burden of divided pain.

I am the father, merciful and proud,
Whose life is ever sacrificed for one
That leans upon him in the lonely crowd
To listen and grow strong. I am the son.

I am the master, firm and bold and brave ;
I reign, I rule, I govern many miles ;
I am the servant, humble as the wave
Beneath the land of God that sings and smiles.

I am the man that counts against his will
The baubles of a realistic mind ;
I am the artist shadowed by the skill
That finds new themes in every passing wind.

I am the scientist that shuns the light
Unless a proof is resting in the flame ;
And I am Faith that looks beyond the night
To find the promise of the holy name.

I am all these, my Love. Ay, many more :
I am the Universe, that garden plot
Where all are good and wise from shore to shore,
And where no soul exists that I am not.

I am all these, my Love. Were there one less
I would not be a woman, large and free ;
Nor would I boast the vision I possess,
Did I not meet the Universe in Thee.

SPINNING SONG

ONE day as I sat at my spinning-wheel,
When only the spirit stirred —
One day as I sat at my spinning-wheel
Awaiting some new word —
One day as I sat at my spinning-wheel
I leaned and listened and heard :

“ Oh spin me a cloak for my soul, my soul,
Of the thread of God's hidden things —
Oh spin me a cloak for my yearning soul,
That I may walk with kings —
Oh spin me a cloak for my lonely soul,
Of a creamy cloth that clings !

Oh spin me a cloak that will shelter me
With its fabric fine and fair —
Oh spin me a cloak that will shelter me
With the beauties of the air —
Oh spin me a cloak that will shelter me,
And neither turn nor tear ! ”

So I touched the wheel and around it ran
In circles sure and swift ;
And my thoughts flew high as around it ran
With its pray'r to love and lift :
Around and around and around it ran,
Spinning my precious gift !

Oh I spun you a cloak with a mother's heart,
All silver and strong and white ;
And you tried it on, with its mother's heart,
And you held it up to the light :
Oh I spun you a cloak with a mother's heart —
But it did not answer quite !

So I altered it with a sister's thought,
All tender and kind and true —
So I changed the cloak with a sister's thought,
But you said, " It will not do " :
It was beautiful with a sister's thought,
Yet it failed to shelter you !

So I turned it into a cloak of Love,
Of Paradise and Hell ;
Oh I turned it into a cloak of Love,
With dreams too sweet to tell ;
But you sighed and said of the cloak of Love :
" It does not fit me well ! "

I spoke no word and I made no moan,
But my spirit was dismayed—
Oh I spoke no word and I made no moan
I could not be afraid :
Oh I spoke no word and I made no moan —
I only prayed and prayed.

I prayed till the sky inclined to me
And hovered over the land.
I prayed until God came down to me,
And touched the cloak with His hand.
I prayed till my work grew under me,
Fulfilling His command.

Then you took the mantle that God had made
And you flung it over your breast,
And you kissed the hem of the cloak He made
And breathed upon and blessed.
Oh, you wore the mantle that God had made,
And it became you best!

YOU

YOU! You! You!

It is ever and ever of you
The world is now singing,
Has ever been singing,
Shall ever be singing

Of you!

The teacher I loved as a child,
Commanding and forcefully mild,
He was not whom they thought —

He was you!

'T was your likeness he clearly expressed
That gave him a place in my breast,
Always yearning and yearning for you!
Always yearning, my darling, for you!
Always, ever and ever, for you!
He was not whom they thought,—

He was you!

It was you whom I loved,

It was you!

It was not my good master,
But you!

You! You! You!

It is ever and ever of you
The world is now singing,
Has ever been singing,
Shall ever be singing

Of you!

The boy whom I met in the street,
Of sympathies tender and sweet,

He was not whom they thought, —
 He was you!
And the flower he handed to me
Came from you far across the deep sea,
Always breathing and breathing of you!
Always breathing, my darling, of you!
Always, ever and ever, of you!
 He was not whom they thought, —
 He was you!
It was you whom I thanked —
 It was you!
It was not my good comrade,
 But you!

You! You! You!
It is ever and ever of you
The world is now singing,
Has ever been singing,
Shall ever be singing
 Of you!
In the friend and companion I love
Does your image most graciously rove
Until both are o'ershadowed
 By you!
And from earth to the skies that are blue
I see nothing but thousands of you!
 Each man that is brave,
 He is you!
 Each voice that is sweet,
 It is you!
 Each tree breathing strength,
 It is you!

Each poem I read
Is of you!
Each picture I see
Tells of you!
Each song that I hear
Praises you!

All goodness, my darling,
Is you!

All courage, my darling,
Is you!

All possessors of beauty
Are you!

All the loved and the loving
Are you!

All hearts that are honest
Are you!

All eyes that are truest
Are you!

I see nothing but thousands of you!
Always thousands and thousands of you!
Always thousands, my darling, of you!
Always, ever and ever, of you!

You! You! You!
It is ever and ever of you
The world is now singing,
Has ever been singing,
Shall ever be singing
Of you!

THE CRY OF THE FUTURE

I HEAR the rain —
The universe shedding its tears of rain
Over the flowers and fields of grain —
Over my heart that will break with pain

I hear the rain.

From across the way
Through the mists of gray
Comes the cry of the child unborn :
“O give me the light
Of my own birthright
On this dark pre-natal morn !

Give me not anger and lust and tears —
Give me not bitterness old with fears —
Give me the crown of the saints and seers ;
(I hear the rain.)

Give me the mind that is yours to give —
Give me the heart that can love and live,
God-like and loyal and positive.

(I hear the rain.)

And give me the best
From the mother-breast
In the form of her whitest thought ;
And measure the length
Of the father-strength
In the life of the father wrought,
And give me a soul
That is large and whole —

A soul that can sob and sing ;
For this is the light
Of my own birthright
And the will of my God and king ! ”

I hear the rain —

The universe shedding its tears of rain
Over the flowers and fields of grain —
Over my heart that will break with pain

I hear the rain.

PHILOSOPHY

WHEN I retrace the steps of yesterday
I see thee only in thy noblest light
And count thy virtues over the array
Of clouds that hide the planets of the night.

The curtain lifts ! and oh ! so gladly I
Behold thee strong and tender, blest and rare ;
For every rose-bud, sainted with a sigh,
Hath saved thee by the beauty of her prayer.

Each favored flower thou hast breathed upon
Hath grown immortal over wold and wood ;
And, looking backward, victory is won,
And, looking forward, everything is good !

ROMEO

ONE William Shakespeare, by a love-dream led,
Called forth the wind's quaint messengers and
said :

“Fair maids, in all directions ye must fly
To gather sweet love-tokens — from the sky,
The stars, the amber sunsets, from the lay
Of heart-birds singing to content the day,
From flowers that dream and trees that speak in
rhyme, —

In truth, from all the lands of Father Time
Bear endless treasures. Capture and beguile
The rich, magnetic charm of many a mile
O'er field and mountain!” So the four maids flew
Beyond the earth of Reason, o'er the dew,
Across the paths of Eloquence, in still
And mystic corners of the broken will . . .
They fluttered home at midnight. The low croon
Of fays arose from hills beneath the moon.
“Now for my gifts!” great Shakespeare said, and each
Deposited her wealth with flowery speech :
Joy,

Rapture,

Melancholy,

Grief —

and lo!

From all these things he fashioned Romeo!

ASPIRATION

“**I**N life what wouldst thou wish to be?” said they
Who gathered 'round me at the close of day.
“Listen, my friends,” I answered; “I would be
A faithful lighthouse, by the human sea, —
Firm, resolute, immovable, I'd shine,
Baptized by breakers, sainted by the brine;
A loyal flame of loving thought, a light
Defying dangers, triumphing o'er night;
A kind, persistent spark, that would extend
O'er rock-bound sea-coast for a helpless friend;
A changeless, towering sum of strength to show
The safety of the waters . . . Friend and foe
I'd shelter and inspire; nor would I fail
Nor falter in the tumult of the gale.
Ay, this the joy my soaring soul would find
To shed its constant blessing o'er mankind.
A stately word immortal, I would gleam
Above the depth and darkness of the stream.
High, hopeful, ever married to my post,
I'd be a lighthouse on the human coast,
A tranquil mother, pausing not for sleep,
A watch-tower ever smiling o'er the deep.

HOPE

HOPE! hope! hope!
There is nothing but hope on earth!
From Eden to man's rebirth,
From Christ to this day of worth,
There's been nothing but hope on earth!
Let your songs be only of hope —
There is nothing but hope on earth!

Sorrow? There never was sorrow, so why should you
murmur and cry?
In all the wide world there is nothing that should shut
out the blue of the sky.
The tears that are dimming the sunlight, the shadows
that darken your trust,
Only blot out the light that should cheer you and are
dragging you down to the dust.

Who am I? Indeed I am many: Past, Present and
Future, my friend!
I'm the face that you see in the distance. I was and
I am to the end.
I am All, and not one is excluded — the Universe,
happy and whole,
Is the life that is working within me, the name of my
worshiping soul!

I am Hope! the light in the window for the millions
of wandering feet
That wander in danger and darkness and long for a
place of retreat;

An anchor which holds the ship steady when the flag
of the storm is unfurled,
A haven of peace and of safety, — I am Hope, the
hope of the world!

I burned in the breast of the sailor, tossed high on
the turbulent waves,
Hastening back to the home of his kindred to find
only fresh-covered graves ;
I'm the lover who dreamed of his sweetheart, and
waked to discover instead
That she, whose white arms should enfold him, had
risen and silently fled.

I followed the silent form
By anguish shaken,
I cleared the cruel storm
Only to waken.

But yet God left, in his infinite grace, the way to her
spirit free,
And I called to her soul from my own soul's depths,
and the answer came back to me ;
She leaned far over the shining clouds, and spoke in
my listening ear :
“ There is nothing but hope in the land of God ; take
heart, there is naught to fear ! ”

Hope! hope! hope!
There is nothing but hope on earth.
From Eden to man's rebirth,
From Christ to this day of worth,

There's been nothing but hope on earth.
Let your songs be only of hope —
There is nothing but hope on earth.

I whisper the maiden who sits and grieves because
love has passed her by;
I cheer the stricken wife who has wept till the fount
of her tears is dry;
I comfort the mother whose heart is wrung for the
child who has gone astray,
And the mourners whose tears are in silence shed
for the dead they have laid away.
I call to the weak and discouraged, "Look up! be
brave!" It is wrong
To grieve the heart of the dear old world that hungers
to be strong!
The best you worship in one beloved, the beauty you
adore,
Shall live and serve you and be your friend now and
forevermore!

"How can I live and be glad?" you ask. Why, a
mother always grieves
When the tender prize of her sacred love is lying
under the leaves.
There once was a time in the cruel past, when, chilled
by a woman's fears,
A grief might have entered my golden days and
washed them away with tears.

But now I see
In each fair thing that grows
One dear to me!
The grateful spirit knows
He did not die . . .
Oh friend, from mile to mile
My loving eye
Beholds his beauteous smile!

So I do not sigh as a mother sighs whose loss has
made her lone,
I only sing as a mother sings who cannot lose her own!
Sorrow? There never was sorrow, so why should you
murmur and cry?
In all the wide world there is nothing that should shut
out the blue of the sky.
The tears that are dimming the sunlight, the shadows
that darken your trust,
Only blot out the light that should cheer you and are
dragging you down to the dust.

Hope! hope! hope!
There is nothing but hope on earth.
From Eden to man's rebirth,
From Christ to this day of worth
There's been nothing but hope on earth.
Let your songs be only of Hope —
There is nothing but hope on earth!

THE POWER OF LOVE

I SANG because the nightingale was still, —
Because the world and I were all alone ;
My only list'ner was the dreaming hill
That Phoebus meets, at eve, to call his own.

Unreason wedded Love long, long ago,
And, wedding Love, Unreason wedded me,
That I might beg the wand'ring winds to blow
My song across the great, responsive sea !

I called them hither, singing with the strength
Born of a pow'r that heaven and you had brought,
Until the dreary miles forgot their length
And married shore to shore and thought to
thought !

“ALONE IN THE RAIN”

SWEETHEART, sweetheart !
Say, dost thou know me ?
Drenched have I come through the damp, leafy lane.
Hast thou no hope in thy welcome to show me ;
Proud little sweetheart,
Alone in the rain ?

Sweetheart, sweetheart !
Far, far above me
The angels are calling o'er mountain and plain.
Listen, they bid thee to look forth and love me,
Poor little sweetheart,
Alone in the rain !

Sweetheart, sweetheart !
Oh, let me lead thee
Close to the sound of our dear wedding strain !
I have the pray'r book of Love I must read thee,
Sad little sweetheart,
Alone in the rain !

Sweetheart, sweetheart,
Thou wilt not grieve me !
Long have I sought thee o'er meadow and main ;
And I've a wit that refuses to leave thee, —
My little sweetheart,
Alone in the rain !

DIVINE INJUSTICE

WHEN autumn leaves were winging
Through woodlands dark and chill,
And sky-bells, softly ringing,
Compelled me to be still,
I heard an angel singing
Across God's tuneful hill.

"I watch," he chanted slowly,
"The saints" . . . Divinely sweet
His lovely voice and lowly
That hastened to repeat :
"I watch the saints so holy
In heaven's fair retreat !"

"Thou child," I answered, "weeping
Dims eyes that still should see ;
The saints, awake or sleeping,
Have little need of thee !
Come down from thy cloud-keeping
And make a man of me !"

SONG

'T WAS centuries ago, my love,
And thou wert by my side ;
Where soft winds o'er the water rove
I named thee for my bride.
Star-trodden was the sky above
(How noiselessly we glide !)
'Twas centuries ago, my love,
And thou wert by my side !

'Twas centuries ago, my love,
In Egypt's pomp and pride
A spirit in my spirit wove
A hope too long denied !
I heard the murmur of a dove
And saw the Crucified —
'Twas centuries ago, my love,
And thou wert by my side !

'Twas centuries ago, my love
And thou wert by my side ;
Where soft winds o'er the waters rove
I named thee for my bride.
Star-trodden was the sky above
(How noiselessly we glide !)
'Twas centuries ago, my love,
We met and prayed and died !

A LOVER'S SONG

SHE is more golden than the golden sun,
More silver than the silver moonlight's glow;
More fair, more rare, more holy than the one
I taught my heart to worship long ago!

She is more starry than the stars that fall
Speechless beneath her beauty. In her eyes
I see my bride, my heaven and my all, —
My light, my love, my deathless Paradise!

She is a rose in God's own garden born —
A queenly rose, to counsel and to bless —
A saintly rose with not a single thorn
Among the white wealth of her loveliness!

She is my angel, my most lofty pray'r,
The sweetest message written in the sky;
And she hath touched the harp-strings of the air
And set to music all eternity!

CHRISTMAS

PARTED the clouds o'er the Land of Light
From the sorrowing earth afar, —
Parted, the clouds on a dark midnight,
For the birth of the eastern star!

There were lowly shepherds that came to pray
The pray'rs that hallowed their weary way
Through the vales of sin and death ;
For lo! in the hush of a wondrous morn,
The hope of the universe was born, —
The king of Nazareth !

Oh loveless world, didst thou fall asleep?
Or hadst thou forgotten thy watch to keep?
(Dear child, in thy dreaming I saw thee weep!)

For only the wise men came to see
The Christ of the far Gethsemane, —
Only the mother prayed with them
By the mystic shrine of Bethlehem,
And only the angels sang, above,
The harmonies of Life and Love !

.

Thou sleeper silent and slow to hear,
With the hope of heaven so near, so near,
How like thou art to the cruel earth
That slumbered knowing the Saviour's birth !

THE KING OF THE EVERYWHERE

WHAT do you see
In the swaying tree
As it toys with the breeze all day?
And oh! what grows
In the blushing rose
That hides your grief away?

And what do you trace
In the laughing face
Of the child with eyes of blue?
And what is the plan
Of the full-grown man
As he looks you through and through?

And what is your part
Of the lover's heart
As you smile with tearful bliss?
And what is the pray'r
In the mother fair
As she stoops her child to kiss?

And what do you find
In the sighing wind
As it sweeps the gleaming shore?
And what is there spun
In the father-sun
As he guards the great world o'er?

And what is so free
In the pearl-blest sea
As it flows upon the night?

And what is so high
In the mother-sky
As she turns the whole world white ?

Oh, what is it then,
Ye stalwart men
And women that mount the hill—
What can it be
That you feel and see
And hear at the touch of will ?

Oh, what is the song
That is strong and long
As it sings through the night and day ?
Answer, ye men,
Over mead and glen,
Oh, answer, ye men, and say !

.

It is God you see
In the swaying tree
That plays with the breeze all day !
It is God that grows
In the blushing rose
That hides your grief away !

It is God you trace
In the laughing face
Of the child with eyes of blue !
It is God's own plan
In the full-grown man
As he looks you through and through !

It is God's own chart
In the lover's heart
As you smile with tearful bliss!
It is God's own pray'r
In the mother fair
As she stoops her child to kiss!

It is God you find
In the sighing wind
As it sweeps the gleaming shore!
It is God that's spun
In the father-sun
As he guards the great world o'er!

It is God that's free
In the pearl-blest sea
As it flows upon the night!
It is God that's high
In the mother-sky
As she turns the whole world white!

It is God's own song
That is strong and long
Through the night and the daylight fair!
It is God above
That is Life and Love
And the King of Everywhere!

HOME

I'M for the home,
The holy, happy home!
That haven sweet
For weary feet,
I'm for the kindly home!
A hearth-fire bright
That doth invite
All brother hearts to come . . .
No tinsel fame
Nor sounding name
Can lure me as the home!

Oh, beautiful the atmosphere God lavished on the
home!

Dear woman, is there anything as sacred as the home?

I'm for the home of music and of lays,
Of cheer and sympathy and light, of counsel and of
praise,
Where, hidden from the common eye, the fair Ma-
donna strays!

I'm for the home
And all its pleasant ways!

I'm for the home!
The calm, consoling home, —
That soothing sky
Of harmony;
I'm for the happy home!
A light to bless
The soul's distress
Between the winds that roam.

A castle good
Of motherhood ;

I'm for the loving home !

Oh, beautiful the atmosphere God lavished on the
home !

Dear woman, is there anything as sacred as the home ?

I'm for the home, and for the home implore
The best of all high thoughts and deeds, — ah, yes
and something more :

A home so true you would not start if Christ stood at
the door !

I'm for the home
And all it has in store !

LOVE'S ANGEL

(On the marriage of two poets)

I HEARD a voice, and, looking high above,
I saw an angel radiant with love.
"Thou shining child," I said, "art thou a light
To lift us o'er the darkness of the night?
A torch of faith? An instrument divine?
A tuneful minstrel from a heavenly line?
What is thy holy word?" I whispered, "Oh,
Thou art so dazzling in thy spirit's glow,
Thou dost enchant me! Tell me, art thou come
To breathe to us dear secrets of a home
Resting behind the clouds? Or art thou one
Descended from the warm and friendly sun
To lead us to contentment? 'Tis a truth,
(Though age should measure words with dreaming
youth
And I should measure mine!) since Adam's birth
There have been many troubles o'er the earth.
Oh, hast thou journeyed over fields of pain
To lead us back to Paradise again?"

"Ah, truly dost thou speak," the fair child sighed.
"In God's own chariot to the earth I ride.
Ay, truly dost thou speak! My happy voice
Floats ever upward, learning to rejoice!
I am love's holy angel, and I sing
The praises of a poet's wedding ring!
Wide, limitless, eternal the sweet word
That bound these two! — Love's breezes softly
stirred

And flowers blossomed where they once were rare,
And lofty spirits drifted through the air,
And, noiselessly discarding her dark shroud,
Lost Eden fell upon them from a cloud !
Lo! I have come with hope! The world may groan,
Ill with the wounds of ages ; winds that moan
May hold us with false messages ; but I
Have come to say that love can never die !
The grieving past kind heaven shall forgive,
Since God hath taught two poets how to live . . .
They read the stars together and let fall
Dear sparks of immortality to all !
They reigned above us with their glorious songs,
That triumphed over life's unhappy wrongs !
They dreamed, they prayed, they listened for the
 sound
That voiced their meanings with a faith profound,
Till, soaring to the highest mount, they spake
For love and loving, ay, for pure love's sake !
True is the message I have brought to-day
And, singing, I must swiftly fly away." . . .
Then, lifting high his holy little head,
Love's beauteous angel to the dull world said :
"Two gifted lovers of the deathless pen
Have opened heaven to the hearts of men !
Ay, lifted them above the weeping sod
To view the fruitful meadowlands of God.
Hope have I brought, and comfort, and good cheer,
For surely love is heaven, and heaven is here !"

“SING ME A SONG”

SING me a song, dear,
Sing me a song!

Days are so barren and nights are so long,
Sorrow and grief through the wilderness throng,—
Sing me a song, dear,
Sing me a song!

Sing me a song, dear,
Full of the sun —
Of lightness and brightness, and victories won.
(I know of the beautiful things thou hast done!)
Sing me a song, dear,
Full of the sun!

.

Sing me a song, dear,
Sing me to rest.
Oh sing me a song from thy high little nest!
I languish for beauty, and beauty is best :
Sing me a song, dear,
Sing me to rest!

THOUGHTS

A Voice (from the grass)

I RISE from the long, tangled grasses,
From the fragrance of sweet, aimless flowers,
From the songs of dear dreamers that love me,
From the spell of the indolent summer.
Alone do I rise from my slumber,
Alone do I stand with my spirit,
Alone do I fly to my heaven
Through the eloquent pathway of silence !
How my soul reaches forth for the beauty
That crowned its original splendor
In the pearl-breathing kingdom of childhood !
How it pleads, over thundering voices,
For its paradise wondrously lovely !
How it yearns, in the depth of my pleasures,
For its home in the heart of the mountain ! . . .

.

An Echo (from the hills)

Oh you, to whom life breathed his secrets
So intimate, precious and tender !
Oh you, whom invisible lovers
Have gifted with power and plenty !
How you long, in the midst of your journey,
For the beautiful hush of the spirit ! . . .
I see it and bless you with cloud-dust,
I feel it with star-pointed fingers,
I hear it above the earth's language,
Above the dark word of the midnight.

I know it and bless you forever,
Because I have sought you in Eden . . .
I have followed you back to your Eden,
The fair, gleaming world of high thinkers,
The white trysting-place of good comrades
Whose true selves live over all others,
To lift them to joy everlasting !

JOSEFITA

SEÑORITA

Josefita,
Winning,
Sinning
Señorita !
Naughty,
Haughty
Josefita !

Fairest of all Spanish faces,
Richest in all Spanish graces
Bright boleros, too, and laces :

Listen while
I beguile
Time, and smile
To surprise
Your dear eyes
As I rise

To sing of the day we took delight in,
When we saw the great bull-fight in
Wonderland you made so bright ! In
Every mood was mischief lurking —
Working swiftly, swiftly working,
Never once a duty shirking !

Still I served you uncomplaining,
Though I lost while you were gaining,
'Twas a joy to see you reigning
Fair and dashing,
Dark eyes flashing !
Josefita,
Josefita !

Lovers clashing,
When they met you,
Vowing never
To forget you,
Eyed me with the perfect schooling
Thwarted love attains when fooling
Is the maiden,
Lover-laden,
With the heart she has impressed
That of all 'tis loved the best
In this world of sad unrest !
Señorita !
Señorita !

Surely, sadly did you rule me !
Surely, sadly did you school me !
Surely, sadly did you fool me !
Dear one, all the while I knew it,
Knowing, still I let you do it :
Ah ! but I have lived to rue it !
Señorita, ah ! how could you
Serve me as a west wind ? Should you
Like such treatment dearest ? Would you ?

.

Josefita,
Josefita !
Winning,
Sinning
Josefita !
Señorita,
Señorita !

Naughty,
Haughty,
Señorita!
I'll forgive you,
I'll forgive you,
Though I'll tell you,
While you live, you
Never can I
Quite forget ! you
Never can I
Quite regret ! you
Dear and daring Spanish pet !
You —
Josefita !

EASTERN SONG.

IT might have been for a thousand years,
It might have been for a day, —
As long as a widow's flood of tears,
As long as a child is gay.

It might have been for a thousand years,
It might have been for a day!
But he never knew and I never knew,
As in the barge we lay,

That Time was a breathless bird that flew
And naught could sing nor say!
It might have been for a thousand years,
It might have been for a day!

It might have been for one glorious noon
Above yon temple gray,
When the sun of a love came down too soon
On the breast of that summer day!

SUMMER AND SILENCE

I HAVE so much to say I cannot speak :
Most full is Nature when her tongue is mute.
Now I recall, and clearly understand,
The stillness in the depth of Summer's heart,
Which, when most still, in soft midsummer days,
I, weak of vision, groping in the dark,
Unblest, unloved, could scarcely comprehend ;
Why, when the season's heart indeed might sing
The fairest song by any season sung,
The lovely singer cast such quiet looks.
Such whispered tones, such murmuring of trees,
Puzzled the heart that had not learned to beat !
My love ! my love ! I understand it all . . .
Two stars uniting made it clear to me,
Suggesting the sweet moment when we met,
And all the countless riches that it brought,
Making my joy too deep and full for speech.

Ah, Summer, what a blind, unloving child
I must have seemed to thy enraptured eyes !
Or didst thou, broad and great, behold the depth
Of what in me one day would set my soul
Adrift upon the sea where love prevails ?
Oh, thou didst guess my heart was born for this,
Thy breezes brought such promises of joy ;
And yet, what child can hear their murmuring
And know the meaning of their wonder-words ?
What woman, e'en though sleeping in her grave,
Can hear without dear dreams of him she loves ?
Sweet Summer, with thy soul in silence wrapped, —

Silence so great that I may know its voice,
Who feel the stillness born of fullest love, —
Approach, and as a woman worshipful,
With soul as richly silent as thy own,
Let me behold thee with my woman's eyes !

MY BRINDLE BULL-TERRIER

MY brindle bull-terrier, loving and wise,
With his little screw-tail and his wonderful
eyes,
With his white little breast, and his white little paws,
Which, alas! he mistakes very often for claws;
With his sad little gait as he comes from the fight,
When he feels that he hasn't done all that he might!
Oh, so fearless of man, yet afraid of a frog,
My near little, queer little, dear little dog!

He shivers and shivers and shakes with the cold;
He huddles and cuddles, though three summers old,
And, forsaking the sunshine, endeavors to rove
With his cold little worriments under the stove!

At table his majesty, dying for meat, —
Yet never despising a lump that is sweet, —
Sits close by my side with his head on my knee
And steals every good resolution from me!

How can I withhold from those worshipping eyes
A small bit of something that stealthily flies
Down under the table and into his mouth
As I tell my near neighbor of life in the South . . .

My near little, queer little, dear little dog,
So fearless of man, yet afraid of a frog!
The nearest and queerest and dearest of all
The race that is loving and winning and small;
The sweetest, most faithful, the truest and best
Dispenser of merriment, love and unrest!

AT EASTER-TIDE

SILENT among the lilies do I stand
Until, enchanted by their beauties, I
Lean forth and, with my thousand spirit-hands,
Gather their wondrousness unto my soul ;
And from that soul, grown wiser by the touch
God left upon it, do I send to thee
A million blessings ! Every thought of Christ
That dwells within to make this earth a place
Of white perfection, — every jewel, too,
That glistens in the sunlight with the songs
Of life and resurrection, — oh, my friend,
My spirit sends thee all the blessed things
That thou hast loved and longed for, and the joy
Is mine to lift thee, on this Easter tide,
To truth and glory high above the stars !
To leave thee singing : “ Empty is the tomb
And he is risen — risen for my sake ! ”
So shall we conquer darkness and distress
And for our brothers rise and rise again !

Silent among the lilies do I stand,
And now, enchanted by their beauties, I
Lean forth and with my thousand spirit-hands
Bless thee and clasp thee to my waiting heart !

AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

OH, dost thou know the sea, the sea,
The blue, blue sea ?

In its impenetrable deeps
A woman sings and sighs and sleeps —
Oh, knowest thou the sea ?

She is at once both wild and calm,
And with a bold, brine-scented balm
She casts her spell o'er thee,

My love,
She casts her spell o'er thee.
Oh, dost thou know the sea, the sea,
The blue, blue sea ?

The sands are shining by the sea,
The dark, dark sea.

In vain I wait, with eager eyes,
To greet the far horizon's prize,

O silent, sailless sea !

In vain the lamps I trim and shine
And save all other ships but thine.
(She casts her spell o'er thee,

My love,
She casts her spell o'er thee.)
Thou dost not know the sea, the sea,
The dark, dark sea.

.

Thou didst not know the sea, the sea,
The black, black sea.

In its impenetrable deeps
A woman sings and sighs and sleeps —

Thou didst not know the sea.
She loved and lured thee in a breath,
Then whispered thee away to death
And cast her spell o'er thee,
 My love, —
Her fatal spell o'er thee! . . .
Alas! thou didst not know the sea,
 The black, black sea!

THREE PICTURES

(Thoughts for Easter)

YOU who would live to make your living strong,
Trust not to wandering winds nor smiling fates ;
You who would keep apart from sin and wrong,
Loving your God, must live between three dates :
The Birth, the Death, the Resurrection Song !

THE MADONNA

Behold the tender mother watching where
Her infant son is smiling through his tears !
Does something hint of darkness and despair,
Of sad and sunless days, of crownless years
To be before the world has heard his prayer ?

THE CRUCIFIXION

Who, gazing here, can summon words to say
How cruel were the deeds of long ago ?
Who, gazing here, feels not the wild dismay
Of those beholding sin, who sadly know
They too, not guiltless, turn their eyes away ?

THE RESURRECTION

The sky-directing fluttering of wings
Suggests the theme for every human voice
That, loving heaven, glad and grateful sings :
Rejoice, my soul ! Rejoice ! Rejoice ! Rejoice !
Oh, rich the tidings this bright vision brings !

IF THOU HAST WON

IF thou hast won a smile from me,
A smile that in the giving,
The giving of its pleasure free,
I made life worth the living,
Go thou and thank the noble soul
Of love, in whose safe keeping
Are all the fairies that control
My smiling and my weeping !

THE WOMAN AND THE ARTIST

FROM thee, O love, I hide these burning tears
 (I left thee lonely for an artist's call):
I who have slumbered through the dreary years
 To waken but a woman after all!

Great lights applauded and the waves ran wild, —
 I was their idol and they thought me rare;
For them I jested, wept and brightly smiled,
 But, O my soul, what bitterness was there!

.
Too late! Too late! Our lives have grown apart;
 I am no longer worthy of thy name. . . .
Could I have known, one moment at thy heart
 Were sweeter than a century of fame!

THE WINTER'S GUEST

THE spring is here among us. To and fro
She walks in flowing garments through the
snow :

Only the favored night and I may know !
Dear, blue-eyed guest of winter ! . . . Oh, breathe
low !

Surprise her not whose mission is to go
Where at the dawn, the hidden flowers blow ;
Nor, with one thought, transform the silent show
Of still perfection she hath taught to grow
Forth from her prayer above the season's woe !
Thou, skeptic moon, believe me, it is so —
The spring is here among us. To and fro
She walks, in flowing garments, through the snow :
Only the favored night and I may know !

THE SILENT SINGER

MELODIOUS singer, still and silent grown
Beneath a gaze so quieting that I,
Though all the winds and waves forget to sigh,
May hear no breathing other than my own,
Too wildly boist'rous drowning the sweet tone
Of one they say is dead who cannot die.

At last among the stars, thy home, thy rest,
Thy people, thou shalt mingle and control.
What need for men to weep, or church-bells toll?
Thou art not dead: thy song-illumined breast
Is summoned higher by divine request,
That heaven and thee may worship soul to soul!

RIVERSIDE

(Near the Shore)

AS noiseless as a thought all unexpressed,
Through dusky shadows, far away from light,
By branches counselled and by weeds caressed,
The mute canoe, upon the stream of night,
Glides to its haven 'neath some quiet hill.

Dream-hushed the drowsing paddle waits to greet
The magic of the moment calm and still.

No song of eve, no sound of dying feet
Breaks through the wordless wonderment. No more

Faint, alien voices bruise the tender air :
Only the muffled waves upon the shore,
And peace and rest and silence everywhere.

A FANTASY

IT came to me on the moonlight,
From the soul of a fleecy cloud,
And whispered softly around me,
And laid aside my shroud.

And nobody saw it enter,
And nobody saw it go, —
Not even the trace of its footsteps
Was seen o'er the dreaming snow.

But it raised me, oh, so gently
From my bed in the frozen sod,
And bore me up to the heavens
To make my peace with God.

SONG

WHY delay? . . .
Why delay? . . .
Why delay, my dearest?
In your eyes,
Such beauty lies,
(Sweetest eyes and clearest),
Asking me the live-long day:
Dearest, dearest, why delay? . .
Why delay? . . .
Why delay? . . .
Why delay,
Why delay, my dearest?
Just for this . . .
Just for this . . .
Just for this, my dearest.
Eyes are blue
And eyes are true
(Sweetest eyes and clearest).
Just that I may hear them say:
"Dearest, dearest, why delay?
Why delay? . . .
Why delay? . . .
Why delay, my dearest?"

WHAT I LOVE

I HAVE a love for the priceless thing,
The thing that you cannot buy —
That you cannot buy for the gems that fling
A dazzling light into crown and ring,
That glow and sparkle, and then take wing —
But not to the fair blue sky,
My love,
Not to the fair blue sky!

I have a love for the soft night-wind,
The wind that the angels love —
That the angels love till they grow so kind
That heaven dwells in the lover's mind,
And the dark, dark world is a league behind,
And the goal one step above,
My love,
The goal one step above!

THE WOOING O' IT

"SIR!" I said, "I cannot love you —
Cannot give to you my trust ;"
But you stole my hand and whispered :
"Heart of mine, you must ! you must !"

"Friend," I said, "I cannot kiss you —
Never kissed I any man !"
But you kissed my warm lips, saying :
"Heart of mine, you can ! you can !"

"Dear," I said, "I'll never wed you :
Feel my heart unmoved and still ;"
But you drew me to you, saying :
"Heart of mine, you will ! you will !"

"But," I said, "I do not love you."
Then you looked me through and through,
Saying, as you pressed me closer :
"Heart of mine, you do ! you do !"

MY CANINE FRIEND

MY canine friend, you need not speak with me —
I note the sad word-struggle in your eye,
The echo of a hidden century
That stilled your voice, nor told the reason why !

You need not speak — I know what you would say
And all the splendid lessons you would teach,
Had not some god, the while you sleeping lay,
Escaped with your grand treasury of speech !

I

TROVATO

I LOOK in the mirror, I gaze in the sea :
How small the reflection they offer of me !
I search the clear river, I question the skies !
But my soul I find only within thy dear eyes.

II

ENTREZ

THY spirit sought my heart at eventide,
Knocking and trembling with its hope to win.
“Thou foolish one, why wait to knock?” I cried :
“Why tremble so? Come in! Come in! Come in!”

GOETHE AND GOUNOD

Faust

GREAT Goethe laid aside his pen ;
The wondrous poem was ended.
An angel came to claim it, then,
Proud-wingèd, she ascended.

“Likest thou this?” And at the feet
Of holy judge she placed it.

“Yea ; but the work is incomplete,
Since Gounod hath not graced it !

“Go, breathe to him, thou angel fair,
The sacred mission given,
Which needs not thee, nor wings, to bear
Its harmonies to heaven !”

LOVE AND THE SOUTHERN BREEZE.

HEARKEN thou to the southern breeze,
Gently stirring
Through unerring
Nature's palace of swaying trees!
Soft, yet bracing,
Interlacing
Love and lilac and life and ease!
Ever soaring,
E'er imploring
Songs of heaven,
Seven times seven,
Just for someone across the seas!
The breath of roses, the hum of bees,
The sprite that wanders o'er distant leas, —
All join the revel, and Spring agrees
In all the world,
The loving world —
Over the world
Or under the world, —
High in the air where it melts into mist,
Or low in the vale where the shades insist
On depths of dreaming, and mysteries
Borne on a thousand kindly keys —
In all the world (and the Spring agrees)
There's naught like the southern breeze!
For thee I find in its fairest theme —
Ay, thee, beloved! my light supreme!

For thee I find and I follow, oh,
So proud and blessed in the twilight's glow!
And I sit with thee 'neath the swaying trees,
Dear love of the southern breeze!

.
Know'st thou of the breeze that is cold?
Over the chilly
World so shrilly
Crying truths that were long untold!
Stern and heartless,
Through the artless
Spirit brushing away the gold!
Ever sighing,
E'er denying
Things of beauty,
Life and duty,
Dear to someone my heart would hold!

The bare trees bending, the bitter blowing,
The track in the snow and the wild songs flowing;
The soulless moon in the winter sky
Darken my path with their "where?" and "why?"

In all the world,
The barren world —
Over the world
Or under the world —
High in the air where it melts into mist,
Or low in the vale where the shades insist

On depths of dreaming that would unfold
The coldest secret in wood and wold —
Ay over the bridge where our hopes are sold
There's naught like the breeze that is cold!
For I find thee not in the frosty lane, —
Oh, I clasp thee not to my heart again!
Thou dost not answer, though long I sing,
Thou canst not answer until the spring. . . .
So I sit and wait 'neath the lean, dark trees,
Dear love of the southern breeze!

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